

TESTIMONY OF RAY BEVIS
LEGISLATIVE COORDINATOR, CONNECTICUT CITIZENS DEFENSE LEAGUE
FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE
FEBUARY 22, 2023

Oppose: H.B. No. 5653 AA ESTABLISHING AN EXCISE TAX ON AMMUNITION TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY GUN VIOLENCE AND INTERVENTION PROGRAM GRANTS.

Senator Fonfara, Representative Horn, Senator Martin, Representative Cheeseman, and distinguished members of the Finance, Revenue, and Bonding Committee;

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. My name is Ray Bevis, I'm the Legislative Coordinator for Connecticut Citizens Defense League. We are a grassroots organization with over 40,000 members devoted to advocating rights affirmed by the Constitution of the United States of America and the State of Connecticut. We are especially dedicated to protecting the unalienable right of citizens to keep and bear arms, for the defense of both self and state, through public enlightenment and legislative action.

Connecticut Citizens Defense League opposes H.B. No. 5653 AA ESTABLISHING AN EXCISE TAX ON AMMUNITION TO PROVIDE FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY GUN VIOLENCE AND INTERVENTION PROGRAM GRANTS. It is estimated that over \$1.6 million in Connecticut sale tax revenue is generated annually from ammunition sales in addition to the revenue generated from the permit fees required to purchase such ammunition. This is over half of the \$2.9 million in funding to community gun violence program grants proposed in this year's governor's budget.

Proponents of H.B. No. 5653 are saying, this is a very reasonable small tax on ammunition. If passed this would at least double the revenue from Connecticut ammunition sales. Double does not seem very small or reasonable. Nor does any taxation on Constitutionally protected rights seem reasonable. This is a proposal to tax the right to bear arms out of Connecticut residents. I ask that this committee amend H.B. No. 5653 to eliminate the existing sales tax on ammunition.

85% of the suspects arrested for gun crimes had previously been convicted. Someone with a prior gun conviction is 8,000 times more likely than someone without a criminal record to be arrested for a shooting.

If the state wants to place an excise tax to generate revenue for private community-based gun violence organizations, then maybe they should be taxing the members of the general assembly for passing legislation that is allowing non-rehabilitated criminals and repeat offenders back on the streets- not the background checked and vetted legal permit holding ammunition buyers.

I thank you for your consideration in amending H.B. No. 5653 to eliminate the Connecticut sales tax on ammunition.

Respectfully,

Ray Bevis

CCDL Legislative Coordinator

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